

# Esophageal Cancer Surgery

Esophageal cancer usually occurs in individuals 50 years of age or older. It is more commonly found in men and approximately four times more common in African American males than in white males. The two most important risk factors for esophageal cancer are smoking and excessive alcohol intake.

The treatment for esophageal cancer depends on the location of the tumor and whether or not the cancer has spread to other parts of the body (metastasis). Surgical removal, esophageal cancer surgery, and radiation are the two methods used. The best results have been obtained by combining surgery and radiation. If the tumor is in the upper one-third of the esophagus (cervical), radiation will probably be used. However, surgery is usually performed if the tumor is in the lower one-third of the esophagus. This is known as surgically resecting the tumor.

Several types of surgical procedures that can be performed are: (1) removal of part or all of the esophagus (esophagectomy); (2) resection of a portion of the esophagus and connecting (anastomosis) the remaining portion of the stomach (esophagogastrostomy); and (3) resection of a portion of the esophagus and anastomosis of a segment of colon to the remaining portion (esophagoenterostomy). The surgical approaches may be done through the thorax (chest) or using both an abdominal and thoracic approach.

Research suggests that physicians who perform 6 or more of these surgeries per year are considered high volume physicians. Physicians who perform 3 or less per year are considered low volume physicians. Most studies suggest that low hospital volume is less than 7 esophageal cancer surgeries per year. However, a recent study identified high volume hospitals as performing 20 or more procedures per year.

[See page 20 for references, numbers 7, 19, 33, 40, and 41.]

Region	Average
Subregion	Annual
Hospital	Volume
<b>Central / Northeastern Region</b>	
<b>Columbia</b>	
Boone Hospital Center	1
University Hospitals and Clinics	4
<b>Kansas City / Western Region</b>	
<b>Kansas City (Jackson County)</b>	
Research Medical Center	1
Saint Luke's Hospital	1
Truman Medical Center-Hospital Hill	1
<b>Rest of Area</b>	
Heartland Regional Medical Center	1
<b>Southeastern Region</b>	
<b>Cape Girardeau</b>	
Saint Francis Medical Center	2
<b>Southwestern Region</b>	
<b>Joplin</b>	
Freeman Health System	1
St. John's Regional Medical Center	1
<b>St Louis / Eastern Region</b>	
<b>St. Louis City / County</b>	
Barnes-Jewish Hospital	11
Christian Hospital Northeast-Northwest	1
Saint Louis University Hospital	3
SSM St. Joseph Hospital of Kirkwood	1
St. Alexius Hospital	1

## Procedure-Specific Questions

- ◆ Will I receive radiation treatment and/or chemotherapy in addition to my surgery?
- ◆ If I need radiation treatments and/or chemotherapy, what are their side effects?
- ◆ Will this surgery impair my speech (make speaking difficult for me)?
- ◆ Will this surgery make it difficult for me to breathe?
- ◆ How will I be able to eat? Will a feeding tube be placed into my stomach?
- ◆ If I need a feeding tube, who will take care of it?
- ◆ What will I be able to eat?
- ◆ Will I only be able to eat at special times?

(See page 3 for other questions)